

**MESSAGE FROM INDIAN AMBASSADOR TO CROATIA,
H.E. MR. SANDEEP KUMAR
70th ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA (15 January 2017)**

Today, as India observes 70th anniversary of its independence, there is much to celebrate and reflect upon. India has grown to \$ 2.2 trillion economy with 7.1% growth in 2016-17. Total trade globally stood at \$ 655 billion. Foreign Direct Investment was \$ 60.1 billion, allowed in 92% of sectors. A uniform Goods and Services Tax was passed in July 2017, paving the way for a common national market. Various socio-economic development programmes were launched such as “Make in India”, ‘Digital India’, ‘CleaUp India’, ‘StartUp India’ by introducing business friendly regulatory environment. India ratified the Paris Climate Agreement, committing to generate 40% electricity from non-fossil sources by 2030. Indian IT industry has gained revenues worth US\$ 155 billion. India ranks amongst top 12 biotech destinations in the world. New strides were made in space when India successfully launched a record 104 satellites in one mission in February 2017.

This year also marks 25 years of establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Croatia. There is a promising business, academic and research partnership which is being expanded with creativity and ‘out of the box’ solutions. There may be limitations of the size of our two economies, geography and culture, but more importantly, there are complementarities of public-private partnerships in sectors of innovation and start-ups, pharmaceuticals, renewal energy, shipbuilding and infrastructure. Additionally, there is converging interest of tourism, Yoga and Ayurveda, that connects our two people.

On this auspicious occasion, I offer salutations to the Indian community in Croatia, to the people of Croatia, and to all the stakeholders in our various programmes. This is also the time to re-emphasize our connectivity with all the provinces of Croatia as part of our outreach programme.

“Indija i Hrvatska u srcu!”